WORLD COCOA CONFERENCE 2012

“Intensification in cacao production through innovation in technology to increase the total value of the cocoa industry”

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November 22 / 2012
Abidjan, Cote D’Ivoire
CONFERENCIA INTERNACIONAL DE CACAO 2012

“Intensificación tecnológica de la producción de cacao para el crecimiento de la cadena de valor”

Noviembre 19-23 / 2012
Abidjan, Costa de Marfil
Last year’s cacao-year production was 4 million tons on 9 million hectares. Fifty million people benefited both directly and indirectly from these activities.

The world’s mean production was less than 0.5 tons per hectare. The slow increase in productivity restrains the economic growth of the cacao sector.

In the cacao-year, 2012-2013, a deficit of 100,000 tones is anticipated. Climate change may contribute to this deficit.
The climate change creates uncertainty in international cocoa supply.

The common cacao cultivars are very sensitive to extreme variations in climate. It is a latent threat, which is contrary to the development of the cacao value chain.

The future of cacao production depends on the attention and investment to fight the threat of climate change.
For the small traditional cacao farmer, it is increasing difficult to manage their farms with increasing environmental risks.

There is an emerging risk that is not completely climatic. Also, these risks are from diseases and insects which are related to climatic change.

On marginal land the cacao is most vulnerable to changes which are reflected as pronounced decreases in production.
Without sufficient technological control increased productive is not obtainable.

The small producers lacking the resources need to change the current paradigm of production from low input-low output to a paradigm that leads to more productivity.

Are there alternatives for the small producer to produce more cacao per hectare?
Is it possible to decrease the area in cacao production; while increasing productivity and income?
Both answers are positive. They should lead to the new paradigm of increased production on less land.

We need to work on the technological factors which are inciting these changes.

The technological controls means the manipulation of natural resources in the productive process (water, fertilizer, soil, etc).
Global cacao productivity has grown at a slow rate in the last 50 years. We should find an explanation for this.

In the same period average corn yield has increased 8 times. Apple yield increased 5 times.

A higher cacao yield per hectare increases the net return and keeps the farmer from growing other crops.
All farms show important variability in the productivity of the land.

For example soil productivity can change in the course of few hundred meters.

To apply the concept of intensive management on small cacao fields we need to identify the best land on the farm.
The best land is the combination of good soil, easy access to water, limited slope, etc.

To take full advantage of the good land we need to use the best available genetic material.

Promoting the goal of higher cacao yields in small farms using modern technology has begun in Ecuador.
- Obtaining 2 and 3 tons of cacao dry beans per hectare has been achieved.

- A small cacao producer and his family with a 2 hectares orchard yielding 2.5 tons per hectare would earn 700 to 800 US dollars per month.

- A farmer with his family investing their resources in the land along with access to low interest loans will facilitate the accomplishment of this new concept.

- The inclusion of timber and fruit trees will increase additional revenue for the farmer in the future.
Árbol clonal de cacao de 18 meses de edad, en el que ya se han cosechado unas pocas mazorcas maduras (Ecuador)
Línea de árboles de teca, una madera de alto valor, en el perímetro de una huerta joven de cacao clonal (Ecuador)
Gracias